

REVERIES IN A CHURCHYARD

By MINTA MACK

— *Some very human
graveside musings*



"**H**ERE lie the remains of Mrs. Elizabeth Davis, the late consort of the Reverend Thomas Davis, Rector of Fairfax. She was related to several of the most respectable families of Virginia and Maryland, lived deservedly esteemed by all the worthy of her acquaintance, and died justly lamented, on the 9th day of May, 1800, *Anno Aetatis* 59."

As I finally succeeded in deciphering the epitaph which filled the entire side of the small, weather-worn, marble headstone, I stood there trying to visualize the life and times of the esteemed lady. Here was her whole history cut in stone, a little stone at that, and the years had all but worn away the words, making them almost illegible. The stone was tipped and sunken, but her history still remains in that little old churchyard in Virginia.

"She was related to several of the most respectable families of Virginia and Maryland," I mused. That, in those days, probably meant the richest as well. I saw her as a young girl roaming those beautiful hills in search of wild flowers and berries, in the quaint colonial costumes of those days, and again as a young lady, with frills and furbelows and hoop skirts; the pride of the ball, the envy of her girl companions, and the hope of every young man of her acquaintance. And of them all she chose a minister. "Consort of the Reverend Thomas Davis," the epitaph records.

He must have been a gay young blade for a minister, to win such an esteemed little lady; or possibly she was one of those timid, devout little bodies who believed that even reading on Sunday was a sin, and thought her soul would be safer in the keeping of one of God's servants. However, according to the inscription on her headstone, her life ended when she was only fifty-nine years old.

I WANDERED around in the churchyard and found this message from another grave:

"All you that come my grave to see
As I am now, you soon may be.
Repent and turn to God in time
For I was taken in my prime."

This was from Sarah, the wife of

John Wren, who died August 13, 1792, aged 28 years.

What an entirely different idea for an epitaph; the first one extolling the virtues of the deceased, and the second one, a warning from the deceased herself.

I went into the church, a delightful, little, red-brick, ivy-covered church, which must be a joy to the eyes of artists, and went to the box pew where George Washington used to sit. I opened the gate and went in and sat down for a little while. As there was still some time before services began, I went to the pew where Robert E. Lee used to sit when he attended services. Strange to say, neither of those famous pews was any more comfortable than the visitor's pew, where I sat during the service.

After the service ended, I again walked through the churchyard, and glanced again at Sarah Wren's headstone.

"All you that come my grave to see
As I am now you soon may be."

At first I saw the ludicrous side of it. Sarah did not say whether she was strumming a golden harp, or keeping the home-fires burning. And then I thought of the serious side and how true that is! I am now, Sarah, after nearly one hundred and fifty years, reading your epitaph, and one hundred and fifty years from now, others will be reading mine. A lot of things have happened, Sarah, since those words were engraved upon your headstone: things that in your day would have seemed utterly impossible, and things will undoubtedly happen in the next hundred and fifty years that today seem just as impossible. Let's come back together, Sarah, you and me, one hundred and fifty years from now, and see what has happened since we left. And let us invite Elizabeth Davis, the minister's wife, to come with us. We will visit the churchyard where your headstone now stands, or rather leans, and see if we can still decipher your name; then we will go to my headstone and see if it looks then as yours looks now. Elizabeth would be shocked today to see how differently ministers and their wives dress and act than they did in your day; I wonder what they will be like one hundred and fifty years from now!

The Church Mo

Ben Lomond Stake

TAKING its name from the nearby peak of the Wasatch range, the Ben Lomond Stake was organized November 21, by a division of the Ogden Stake.

The new stake, one hundred forty-sixth in the church, has a membership of approximately 5,700, in the Ogden Seventh, Eighth, Twenty-first, Twenty-ninth, Lorin Farr, North Ogden, and Pleasant View wards. Ogden Stake, with an approximate membership of 6,300, has the Ogden Fourth, Sixth, Twentieth, Thirteenth, Eden, Huntsville, and Liberty wards.

Arthur W. Budge, formerly first counselor in the Ogden Stake, was sustained as president of the Ben Lomond Stake, with Francis A. Child, formerly second counselor in the Ogden Stake, as first, and Bishop Harold S. Campbell of the North Ogden Ward as second counselor.

President Samuel G. Dye was retained as president of the Ogden Stake with Bishop Lawrence H. Evans of the Sixth Ward and Bishop Arias G. Belnap of the Fourth Ward as new counselors.

The formation of the new stake was under the direction of Elders John A. Widsøe and Spencer W. Kimball of the council of the twelve.

Canning Report

AT the close of the canning season in November reports showed that 653,615 cans had been processed at the home canning unit at Salt Lake City's Welfare Square by independently organized quorum, ward, and stake groups.

The total includes the following: asparagus, 17,825 cans; peas, 145,957; beets, 26,562; string beans, 149,957; corn, 135,028; tomatoes, 119,527; tomato juice, 51,245; carrots, 2,402; venison, 1,239; miscellaneous, 2,394.

The Salt Lake City plant is the largest of the canneries set up by the church Welfare program for use by the members in preserving surplus harvests.

Washington Chapel Anniversary

AN attractive commemorative booklet has been issued by the Washington Ward reviewing the ten years since the dedication of the Washington, D.C., chapel on November 5, 1933. Built of Utah marble, its spire reminiscent of the Salt Lake Temple, the chapel creditably represents the church in the nation's capital. Regular organ recitals have attracted thousands of visitors during the decade.

Beginning as a branch, meeting in the homes of members, the Washington

congregation has seen steady growth: in 1938 Arlington and Chevy Chase branches were formed from it; with the organization of a stake in 1940, it was called Washington Ward; on a Sunday in January 1941 as many as eighty-one membership recommends were presented; and in October 1941 it was divided to form the Washington and Capitol wards. The war has brought many new faces to Washington. In the words of the anniversary booklet:

The feelings of the first congregation are relived in great measure today by church members who attend services for the first time—pride in participation, thankfulness for the quietness and exquisite beauty, glad recognition of familiar Latter-day Saint features, and humility before the spirit of the chapel which has grown richer with each year.

Old Deed

AN old deed, executed in England, April 19, 1798, and signed by Oliver and Rockselena Snow, grandparents of President Lorenzo Snow, has been given to the church historian's office for safe keeping. The deed is believed to be the oldest article held by the historian's office.

Excommunications

James LeRoy Athay, born August 10, 1890. Excommunicated August 16, 1943, Thirteenth Ward, Emigration Stake.

Edna Katherine Kaggie Blair, born June 5, 1915. Excommunicated August 29, 1943, at Sparks Ward, Reno Stake.

Paul Everett Bourne, an elder, born August 3, 1920. Excommunicated October 15, 1943, at Lanford Branch, New England Mission.

Richard R. Lyman, apostle, born November 3, 1870. Excommunicated November 12, 1943, Salt Lake City.

Mary Louise Bird Savage, born November 28, 1895. Excommunicated November 23, 1943, at Sheridan, Northwestern States Mission.

Jesse Mathers Savage, born July 19, 1898. Excommunicated November 23, 1943, at Sheridan, Northwestern States Mission.

Marjorie Ellen Braden Sprague, born July 14, 1912. Excommunicated November 23, 1943, Northwestern States Mission.

Root Cellar

MEMBERS of the Ogden Twenty-third Ward of the Mt. Ogden Stake recently completed a sixty by thirty foot root cellar to provide adequate storage space for the harvests from the victory gardens and quorum Welfare gardens in the ward. The seventies' quorum of that ward had thirteen acres under cultivation, and the elders' quorum, five acres. Members of the ward used the home canning units of the Welfare program to can nearly ten thousand cans of beets, beans, peas, tomatoes, corn, and peaches.